



What If?

Grades: 9-12
Time: One class period

Description: This activity will give students an opportunity to think about how their lives would be different if they were a member of the opposite sex or another race/culture.

Objective

- Students will be able to better understand the effects of gender/race stereotyping on individual lives.

Materials:

- Index cards
- Flip chart
- Marking pens

Procedure:

Note: Remind students to treat everyone's opinions with equal respect and to build on each other's ideas.

1. Hand out index cards (one per student).
2. Ask students to take two to three minutes to think and write about how their lives would be different if they had been born a member of another gender or race/culture. Things they should consider include but are not limited to the following:
 - Personal and career choices
 - Skills
 - Interests
 - Expectations from family and society about their career choices
3. Divide students into mixed groups by gender/race (three to six per group). Have half of the groups brainstorm the benefits and drawbacks of being male and half brainstorm the benefits and drawbacks of being female.
4. Have each group select a reporter to write down the group's responses. Allow 8 to 10 minutes for this activity.
5. Ask each group to discuss the possible benefits and drawbacks of being a member of another race/culture based on the items listed in step 2. Allow 6 to 8 minutes for this activity.
6. Bring groups together and ask each reporter to give a brief summary of their group's discussion.
7. Discuss with groups what individuals can do to overcome perceived drawbacks in reaching their educational, personal, career, and financial goals.